

VZCZCXRO4084
PP RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSB #0518/01 1641436
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 131436Z JUN 07
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1584
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHUJA/AMEMBASSY ABUJA 1626
RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 1493
RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 1630
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 0289
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0895
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1258
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1686
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 4097
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1455
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 2116
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0755
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC//DHO-7//
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHMFISS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1847
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK//DOOC/ECMO/CC/DAO/DOB/DOI//
RUEPGBA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ23-CH/ECJ5M//

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000518

SIPDIS

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AF/S FOR S. HILL
NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR B. PITTMAN
USAID FOR M. COPSON AND E. LOKEN
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
ADDIS ABABA FOR ACSS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [WMN](#) [ASEC](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: WOZA LEADERS RELEASED THEN CLAIM VICTORY AT SECOND
DEMONSTRATION

REF: A. HARARE 503

[1](#)B. 06 HARARE 01433

'Silent March' Arrestees Released

[1](#)1. (U) All seven Women of Zimbabwe Arise! (WOZA) activists arrested in Bulawayo on June 6 (Ref A) have been released. On June 8 police released without charge the five WOZA members initially arrested at the demonstration, and released WOZA leaders Jenni Williams and Magodonga Mahlangu on June 10 after charging the two leaders with violating public order sections of the Criminal Code. The two women posted Z\$100,000 bail (about US\$1.50 at the parallel market exchange rate) and are due back in court on June 18.

[1](#)2. (U) Neither Williams nor Mahlangu was injured while in custody; however, they told us that conditions at the jail were deplorable. Several of the other arrestees were not so fortunate and required medical attention upon their release, mostly for severe bruising from baton wielding police at the time of arrest.

WOZA Keeps Up the Pressure and Claims Victory

[1](#)3. (U) With Williams and Mahlangu fresh out of jail, WOZA kept up the pressure. On June 11 more than 150 WOZA supporters gathered in the rural town of Filabusi, located

about 1.5 hours from Bulawayo in Matabeleland South Province, for a local launch of the group's "People's Charter" campaign for social justice (Ref B.). Williams told us, however, that the police must have had advanced warning because they arrived at the staging area before the demonstration began and arrested two WOZA activists.

¶4. (U) As was the case in Bulawayo on June 6, the WOZA members not arrested marched to the police station and demanded to be arrested in a show of solidarity. This time, however, the police allowed them into the station and called in the ruling party ZANU-PF district administrator to meet with the women and listen to their complaints. Initial reports from WOZA indicated that police had arrested the group. When contacted later by lawyers representing the WOZA members, the police claimed that they had only met with the women and never made any arrests.

¶5. (SBU) Williams told us that WOZA was pleased with the district administrator's attempt to engage the group. She was also encouraged that the police kept copies of the "People's Charter" to pass on to provincial leaders. Williams added that in contrast to the brutal treatment they had just received in Bulawayo, WOZA members considered the event in Filabusi a significant victory and a reaffirmation of their peaceful resistance approach.

Comment

¶6. (SBU) WOZA continues to be one of Zimbabwe's most active and successful civil society groups. Despite police getting

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the drop on the Filabusi demonstration, WOZA's strategy of a series of quick strike actions of one to two hundred supporters in various parts of the country keeps the government guessing where they might pop up next. Additionally, their consistent focus on bread and butter issues -- school fees, food security, jobs -- resonates well in both urban and rural areas. End Comment.
DELL